SciFiNow speaks to Wes Craven, Robert Englund and others about the fear franchise that was a dream come true for thrill-seeking Eighties cinemagoers...

WORDS CALUM WADDELL

"If you have seen one film by Wes Craven it is safe enough, I think, to skip the others. The genre labours enough critical disapproval and outright dislike; one need not make a bad situation worse by underwriting films of porno-violence" – Stephen King, *Danse Macabre*.

We can perhaps forgive the world's most famous horror author for such a comment. After all, in 1981 – when Stephen King released his critical study *Danse Macabre* – Wes Craven had made his name as the director of two grim and gritty grindhouse offerings: 1972's *The Last House On The Left* and 1977's *The Hills Have Eyes*. Although both films are now seen as early examples of a fast-developing terror talent, at the time their main claim to fame was in causing a stink, pushing the boundaries of on-screen violence and baiting international censors (*Last House* was banned in the UK, while *Hills* was drastically cut by the BBFC). Nevertheless, by the start of the Eighties, Craven (who had evolved out of the New York adult film world with his partner in crime, Sean Cunningham) was starting to make some leeway into the mainstream. 1981 saw him hook up with future mega-star Sharon Stone for *Deadly Blessing*, a much more subdued backwoods horror effort, and 1982 brought the comic-book adaptation *Swamp Thing*, which reunited him with *Last House* star David Hess. Yet Craven had one script in particular that he was eager to see realised: *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. Sadly, every studio in town had turned it down – with the exception of an independent producer named Robert Shaye, the head of a down and dirty exploitation outfit called New Line Cinema (later to be known as 'the house that Freddy built').

In his introduction to the book *The Nightmare Never Ends*, Shaye – whose New Line branch would conquer Hollywood with the likes of *Se7en*, *Lord Of The Rings* and *The Golden Compass* – recounts that "Wes was problematic. I had seen *The Last House On The Left* and was frankly appalled. It was beyond horrific. It was brutal. But I rather liked *The Hills Have Eyes*. It was apparent to me that Wes had access, somewhere, to a very twisted fantasy world." As a result, Shaye – fresh from producing such cult titles as John Water's 1981 farce *Polyester* and 1982's inventive chiller *Alone In The Dark* – opted to pick up *A Nightmare On Elm Street*. It would take him no less than three years to raise the money and kick Craven's golden egg into production. "*Last House* and *The Hills Have Eyes* are definitely very different from my later work – and there's a continuation there between the two," states Craven to **SciFiNow**. "But a character like Freddy Krueger is much more universal. Everyone can relate to bad dreams. Plus, I had no intention of revisiting the brutality of these earlier movies." Although the original *Nightmare On Elm Street* would introduce the world to a young actor named Johnny Depp (who is eaten by his own bed in a memorably outlandish set piece), it would be Robert Englund as the villainous Freddy Krueger, 'bastard son of 100 maniacs', that captivated the horror crowd. A wise-cracking, hideously scarred ghoul, Krueger was a "nasty, filthy child killer" who was cornered and burned to death by a group of vigilante parents. Now, he seeks revenge on those who slaughtered him by killing their offspring while they sleep...

"The thing about Freddy is this – he is just so unabashedly evil," laughs Englund when **SciFiNow** catches up with him. "He is not politically correct, he does not apologise and he's not ⇒

The Complete Guide To... A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET

The Freddy fad resulted in a number of tie-in goodies that collectors continue to hunt out to this day...

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For only £42.95 you can buy a "deluxe replica" on Amazon, although a much cheaper (albeit still officially licensed) copy of the famed Krueger hand-knives can be had for only £6.99. Hey, it's not as if you're actually going to kill anyone with these are you?

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The special effects maestro behind the [illegible]orror icon

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A Nightma[illegible]
Freddy Vs Jason Vs [illegible] November 2007, but [illegible] search out the short-live[illegible] printed in atmospheric bla[illegible]

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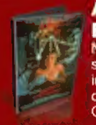
The Official Histo[illegible] Nightmare On Elm [illegible] from 1984 through t[illegible] the-scenes look at the [illegible] full of great pictures and [illegible] Alas, it is now very rare (An[illegible]

The *Nightmare On Elm Street* series has always revelled in the more sinister scenarios.

The series is full of stock horror characters, and although the clichés can grate, they're often a guilty pleasure.

The Elm Street movies, film by film

A look at Wes Craven's entire series



A Nightmare On Elm Street

Nancy Thompson and her school friends are being stalked in their sleep by the vengeful dream-demon Freddy Krueger in Craven's finest fear film.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge

Jesse Walsh finds that Freddy possesses him in order to re-enter the 'real' world.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors

Nancy Thompson is now a sleep therapist at a sanatorium where Freddy is doing his latest slicing.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master

Freddy is back but a new adversary, Alice, learns to control her dreams and defeat Krueger.

A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child

Unable to defeat Alice, Freddy tries to take over the body and soul of her unborn baby.

Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare

In part six of the series, all of the Elm Street children are finally dead but dream monster Freddy Krueger has one last score to settle: he has a daughter.

Wes Craven's New Nightmare

Freddy Krueger breaks out from the fictional realm and into the real world, hunting down the people who made movies about him...

Freddy Vs Jason

Unable to get to a new generation of Elm Street kids, Freddy uses Camp Crystal Lake killer Jason Voorhees to do his bloody bidding for him. Until Freddy realises he must take down Jason himself.

trying to get any sympathy. He is always in a revenge motif. There is no place for him in the future so he kills the future generations. Freddy is also pretty insightful. He certainly knows people's weaknesses and how to exploit them and I think audiences respond to that. I also think he is the logo of eight films now and, out of these, I think that most of them are pretty damn good." Although Englund had dabbled in the genre before (most memorably in the TV series *V* but also in the likes of Tobe Hooper's 1976 monster mash *Eaten Alive* and 1981's 'video nasty' *Dead & Buried*) it was his turn as Freddy that allowed him to achieve stardom. "There is something just so iconic about the character as well," maintains the actor. "The hat, the glove, the striped jumper… It is such a striking image." Moreover, whereas previous modern monsters – such as Jason Voorhees and Michael Myers – could be played by any old Joe, Freddy was a proper character role, making Englund the true heir to the throne previously occupied by the likes of Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. "I have a theory that the most powerful horror films have to do with families," continues Craven. "You know, *Last House* is that way, *Hills* is that way and *A Nightmare On Elm Street* is that way. But the thing about the *Elm Street* movies is that the star is always Robert Englund. You cannot do one of these films without him."

Nevertheless, that did not stop them from trying. After *A Nightmare On Elm Street* did great business at the box office (taking in $26 million in the US which, in 1984, was no short change), New Line rushed a sequel into production right away. Craven could not be enticed to return to the series after his initial idea for a follow-up was vetoed by Shaye and a new director was quickly found. The man for the job was Jack Sholder, who had previously helmed the aforementioned maniacs-on-the-loose caper *Alone In The Dark*. However, according to the filmmaker, Englund was in danger of not being brought back to the Freddy fold. "*A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2* was very hurried," states the director to **SciFiNow**. "And the one thing I had to fight for was to bring back Robert. To the people making the movie, Freddy could have been played by anyone. I had to say to them, 'This is not just another masked guy like Jason or Leatherface. Freddy has to be Robert Englund.' I eventually won but the movie itself was not as good as it could have been. I accept that I made a big mistake by bringing Freddy into the real world." Indeed, whereas the first movie made it clear that Craven's slasher exists only the world of nightmares, the first sequel – dubbed *Freddy's Revenge* – spins an odd tale of possession, repressed homosexuality and a razor-fingered villain that can freely walk around in public. "Yeah, it didn't quite work," states Sholder. "But there are some things I do think I can take credit for. For example, *Freddy's Revenge* was the one that gave Englund more lines and let him develop the character's sense of humour." ➤➤

Creator Wes Craven has given horror a character that will be referenced for years to come.

The men who made Freddy

The special effects maestro behind the horror icon

Several of Hollywood's major effects names have plied their trade on the Freddy films – but it was David Miller who gave the gloved ghoul his iconic look in the first movie. He would return to oversee the character's prosthetics in 1989's *The Dream Child* – also creating the memorable 'Freddy baby'. However, the man who really made Krueger his own, and became synonymous with the effects of *Elm Street*, was Kevin Yagher. From 1985's first follow-up *Freddy's Revenge* through to 1988's *The Dream Master*, Yagher brought viewers a more detailed, and arguably even more gruesome, visage for the screen's favourite slasher. Such work did not go unnoticed and the artist went on to be employed on such hits as *Sleepy Hollow*, *Aeon Flux* and the *Mission: Impossible* films.

Taking over from Miller and Yagher for *Freddy's Dead* was someone who was also a director in his own right: John Carl Buechler. As a filmmaker, Buechler had called the shots on 1988's twosome of *Cellar Dweller* and *Friday The 13th Part VII: The New Blood*, while his effects work had included the likes of *Re-Animator* and *From Beyond*. Most recently he worked his latex magic on Englund, and Kane 'Jason' Hodder, on 2006's sleeper hit *Hatchet*.

A new Freddy was needed for 1994's *New Nightmare* and the guys to do it were Robert Kurtzman, Greg Nicotero and Howard Berger of the famed KNB Effects group. Today, KNB is Hollywood's top effects house – going from low budget horror to the likes of the *Narnia* films, *Transformers* and television's *CSI*.

Macabre memorabilia

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Freddy Krueger goblet

We are not even sure we like this. It's, um, pretty hideous really. But it is also amusing to think about serving guests wine from these macabre puppies, which are decorated by Freddy's grinning visage. Horrify your dinner guests for just £4.99.

Freddy Krueger records!

When Alice Cooper hooked up with Jason for the frankly embarrassing *The Man Behind The Mask*, Freddy quickly joined Fat Boys for 1988's *Are You Ready For Freddy?* It was hilariously awful, but a CD single can still be had for around £5.00.

A Nightmare On Elm Street comics

Freddy Vs Jason Vs Ash saw the light of day in comic book form in November 2007, but we'd recommend that Krueger completists search out the short-lived, two issue Marvel line of *Elm Street* comics, printed in atmospheric black and white, in 1989.

The Nightmare Never Ends

Tracing the series from 1984 through to *Freddy's Dead*, this behind-the-scenes look at the *Elm Street* franchise is packed full of great pictures and illuminating information. Alas, it is now very rare (Amazon is asking £145)... Watch those second-hand stores!

Ten of the best The top ten of Freddy's terrors

1 Talk about earache!
(Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare)
Hearing impaired Carlos (Ricky Dean Logan) is given a new earpiece by Freddy... Of the ultra-sensitive kind! Even a pin drop can cause excruciating pain and when Mr Krueger drops several of them from a high height the poor bugger's head explodes!

2 Don't do drugs
(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)
"Wanna get high?" asks Freddy Krueger to recovering heroin addict Taryn White (Jennifer Rubin). His razors are promptly replaced with syringes and, in a particularly lethal moment, ten watts of junk are injected into the luckless girl, whose arms suddenly develop puckering, moving holes...

3 Old habits die hard
(Wes Craven's New Nightmare)
Hollywood special effects wizard Chase Porter (David Newsom) is working hard on a new *Nightmare On Elm Street* movie. But Freddy Krueger's famous glove begins to move on its own accord and, before long, it violently leaps up into the air and attacks him... It's only a dream, though. Or is it?

4 Freddy's first filleting
(A Nightmare On Elm Street)
The series' initial demise is also the nastiest out of all eight movies. Tina (Amanda Wyss) is dragged from her sleep and torn to shreds while her boyfriend Rod looks on helpless. Who said Wes had calmed down since *Last House On The Left*?

5 Bon appetite!
(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child)
Obsessive about keeping the perfect body, Greta (Erika Anderson) falls asleep at the dinner table and meets her new garcon, Freddy. Forced to eat until she explodes (and then served her guts) this is Grand Guignol at its finest.

6 Alien has nothing on this
(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge)
"He's in me!" screams Jesse (Mark Patton) to his best friend Grady. Yes, he is – and in a spectacular moment of special effects, Freddy literally bursts out of the possessed lad's torso – *slowly*. This is before CGI remember...

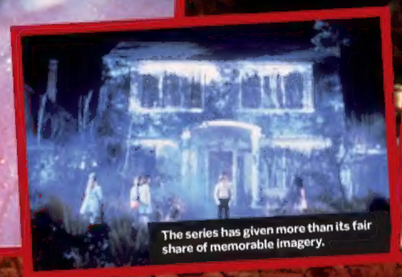
7 Cockroach-carnage
(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master)
Fitness freak Debbie (Brooke Theiss) falls asleep at her weights and has her arms broken off by Freddy, sprouting cockroach limbs in their place. She is transformed into an insect before being summarily squashed.

8 Puppet-pain
(A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)
Philip (Bradley Gregg) has his arms and feet slashed asunder, with Freddy taking his loins and playing him like a walking puppet. In agony, the viewer actually feels relief when the poor teenager is forced to tread to his death.

9 Hockey mask vs razors
(Freddy Vs Jason)
It was the one that Eighties horror geeks waited for and the end result saw mixed results. Who won? Who cares when there's this much silliness on screen? Freddy gets the best lines and more than holds his own against *Friday The 13th*'s chief baddie.

10 Death-by-bed
(A Nightmare On Elm Street)
Despite being warned not to fall asleep, Glen (Johnny Depp) does just that. The result is that his entire bed opens up and consumes him. A few tantalising seconds later and a river of blood bellows upwards, covering his entire ceiling in plasma.

Elm Street has always been a series for actors aching to ham it up.



The series has given more than its fair share of memorable imagery.

There are few horror creations as iconic as Freddy Krueger.

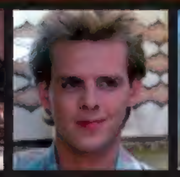
Although *Freddy's Revenge* would be critically pummelled upon its November 1985 release, it was – once again – an enormous commercial success. Nevertheless, perhaps taking notice of the negative press, Shaye brought Craven back to his New Line office and asked him to develop a script for a third movie. The result (which was co-written by Craven's friend Bruce Wagner) became the basis for 1987's *Dream Warriors*, the best of the *Elm Street* follow-ups. Wisely, *Part 3* opted to ignore its immediate predecessor and instead picked up six years after the events of the first movie. This also allowed two of the stars of the original picture, Heather Langenkamp and John Saxon, to return to the *Elm Street* universe. Sadly, Craven would not direct the feature – with the job instead going to Chuck Russell, who would later find fame and fortune as the helmer of such blockbusters as *The Mask*, *Eraser* and *The Scorpion King*. "It was my first directing gig and I really was a fan of the first one," mentions Russell. "I pushed myself with that movie. I didn't think that I could make it scarier than the first film but I thought I could find a way to make it thrilling and funny and to take what was surreal and funny about Freddy and push that aspect a little bit further. I think the *Elm Street* series works because of the camaraderie of the teenagers. There's something magical there that we can all relate to – that time in life where no adults believe what you say." Nevertheless, Shaye expected the filmmaker to add his own touch to the screenplay, which he did – bringing in Frank Darabont, who would later work on Russell's remake of *The Blob* – and starting afresh. "I had ten days to do a complete page one rewrite on *Dream Warriors*," recalls the director. "But that's the way it happens – when it happens, it happens fast."

A rare example of a sequel that seamlessly complements its inspiration, *Dream Warriors* gave Patricia Arquette her breakout role as a troubled teen stalked by Freddy and helped by Langenkamp's sympathetic sleep therapist (*Matrix* star Laurence Fishburne also features in the plot). However, although it seems to conclude the Freddy mythology with a well realised finale, it took only 16 months for yet another *Elm Street* picture to slip out. Still, it was with 1988's *Dream Warriors* that Englund would finally be awarded pre-credits 'star' billing and see himself become a household name (he even negotiated a directorial job, *976-Evil*, out of his Freddy contract). Furthermore, with a notably bigger budget – and Renny Harlin calling the shots – the fourth *Elm Street* offering was loud, garish and pure popcorn. "I like double bills," reflects Englund. "I like my bang for my bucks and I think that parts three and four go together perfectly." Although part four, dubbed *The Dream Master*, took in more money than any *Elm Street* offering before it, there were signs that the character was beginning to suffer from overexposure. Indeed, if *Dream Warriors* introduced a Freddy music video for MTV – and American parents could now buy *Elm Street* pyjamas for their kids (!) – then by 1988 there was also a *Freddy's Nightmares* television series. "I did that show mostly for the chance to direct and to get my Director's Guild card," admits Englund of the small-screen spin-off that ran for 44 episodes. "We worked 24-7 on that. Looking back it was a pretty rough show to work on."

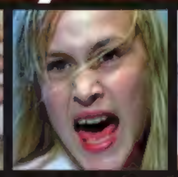
Consequently, by the time of 1989's *The Dream Child*, the fifth *Elm Street* movie since 1984, it was obvious that fatigue was setting in on the Freddy persona. Whereas Harlin's sequel took in $49 million domestically, *The Dream Child* – directed by *Predator 2*'s Stephen Hopkins >>

Where are they now? Whatever came of the Elm Street children?

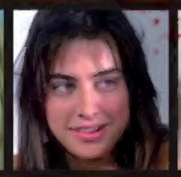
Heather Langenkamp
(Nancy Thompson, A Nightmare On Elm Street 1 and 3, New Nightmare)
She didn't reach the heights of co-star Johnny Depp, but Langenkamp appeared in such TV shows as *Just The Ten Of Us* and *Growing Pains*. In 2008 she co-directed horror film *Prank*.



Mark Patton
(Jesse Walsh, A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 2: Freddy's Revenge)
1985's ill-fated sequel marked Patton's sole leading man role (he had also auditioned for the part played by Johnny Depp in the original film). He now directs local theatre from his base of Venice, California.



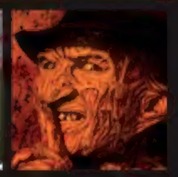
Patricia Arquette
(Kristen Parker, A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)
One of the most famous *Elm Street* graduates, Arquette went on to become a bankable actress following her turns in such high profile fare as *True Romance* and *Stigmata*.



Jennifer Rubin
(Taryn White, A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3: Dream Warriors)
One of the most memorable *Elm Street* teens, the stunning Jennifer Rubin went on to top-line 1995's sci-fi shocker *Screamers* and 1999's *Road Kill*. Today, she is retired from the acting business.

Lisa Wilcox
(Alice Johnson, A Nightmare On Elm Street 4 and 5)
Lisa Wilcox headlined two of the *Elm Street* sequels and nowadays runs her own jewellery business with *Nightmare On Elm Street 4* co-star Tuesday Knight. Her latest film credit is drama *A Place Called Hollywood*.

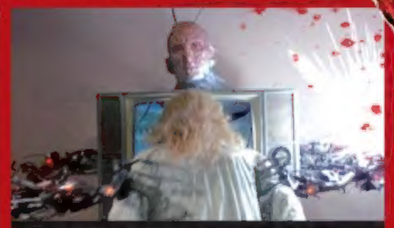
Lezlie Dean
(Tracy, Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare)
The beautiful Dean had the honour of killing Freddy. Although she continued acting in bit parts on TV, Dean's biggest success would come as a member of controversial rock band Fem2Fem (the entire group even undressed for *Playboy* magazine!).



Robert Englund
(No introduction needed, surely)
Englund, the man behind one of horror's most iconic creations, continues to carve out a niche in the genre, with his more recent efforts including *2001 Maniacs*, *Zombie Strippers*, *Jack Brooks: Monster Slayer* and episodes of *Chuck* and *Supernatural*.

The wit and wisdom of Freddy Krueger

"I'm your boyfriend now Nancy"
(Freddy to Nancy, shortly after disposing of her beau Glen in *A Nightmare On Elm Street*)

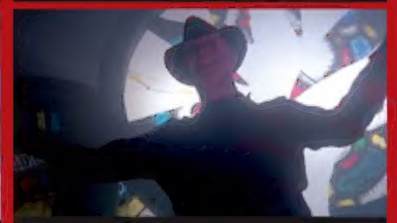


"Welcome to prime time, bitch"
(Freddy, to wannabe actress Jennifer, before smashing the poor girl, head first, into a TV set in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3*)

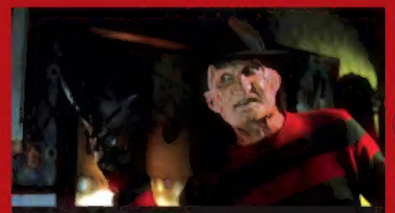
"What's wrong Joey? Feeling tongue tied?"
(Freddy, to sanatorium teen Joey, after tying him to a bed with living, moving tongues in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 3*)

"Wanna suck face?"
(Freddy to Sheila before, literally, sucking the air from her body in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master*)

"How's this for a wet dream?"
(Freddy, after drowning Joey in his bed in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 4: The Dream Master*)

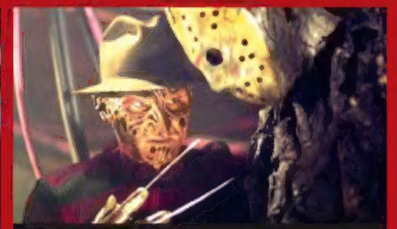


"It's a boy!"
(Freddy to Alice after resurrecting in *A Nightmare On Elm Street Part 5: The Dream Child*)



"What's with kids today huh? No respect"
(Freddy in *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*)

"Now I'm playing with power!"
(Freddy while killing somebody after projecting them into a videogame in *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*)



"You're slow, you're stupid... and you've got no style" (To Jason in *Freddy Vs Jason*)

– netted only $22 million (interestingly, the same year also saw time called, at least temporarily, on two other horror franchises: *Friday The 13th* and *Halloween* – new sequels to both also underperformed theatrically). 1989's *Elm Street* instalment featured the return of Lisa Wilcox, a pretty blonde who was introduced as 'the dream master' in part four. In an odd plot twist, she finds herself pregnant and discovers that Freddy is trying to be reborn through her new baby. The result seems to be a weirdly conservative, anti-abortion parable, although Englund thinks otherwise. "I know Stephen Hopkins and I don't think that was what he was trying to say," mentions the actor. "Look, there are Jungian and Freudian things that are in all of these movies, which stem from Wes. He called Freddy 'the bastard son of 100 maniacs', remember? But we layer that stuff and it is not really thematic. I think that the viewers might sense it in their heart but they can't quite put their finger on it – however, it is all there: the Freudian thing of sex with your mother, abuse, abortion, relationships, rape – all these things are floating around but it is not the theme *per se*. I think the theme per se is that you better mature and face difficult situations. I would say that is what *Part 5* is about."

Although Wilcox was the sole *Elm Street* heroine to leave the franchise alive, she was not brought back for 1991's disastrous *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*. "They went a totally different direction but if you look at the story of the first two *Nightmare* films they have nothing to do with one another either," claims the actress, speaking today. "They just wanted to go in a different way with *Freddy's Dead*, but I have fantastic memories from these movies. Robert is a great, humorous, very intelligent actor – lots of fun and God bless his soul for sitting in that makeup chair for hours and hours every day. I had to wear Freddy makeup for 12 hours on *The Dream Child* and I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror!"

Although 1991's *Freddy's Dead* saw Craven's iconic creation reduced to a comedy afterthought (even killing someone via a Nintendo videogame in one of the worst cases of product placement ever), it at least seemed to do what it said on the box: at the end Englund was splattered across the screen in colourful 3D. However, Craven himself had other ideas and the result was 1994's inventive *Wes Craven's New Nightmare*. "I spent years trying to get somebody to back *New Nightmare* and it was very difficult – everyone in Hollywood thought it was a dumb idea," states the director. "But Bob Shaye really liked it from back in the very beginning – he just wasn't able to find the money to fund it so it took a few years to get it done." The resulting movie brought Freddy into the real world – and saw Heather Langenkamp and John Saxon return (both playing themselves), while Englund did double duties as his proper self and a new, more edgy Freddy. Even Craven and Shaye figured in the plot. "It was actually kind of weird being in front of the camera on *New Nightmare*," laughs Craven. "I remember that after a couple of takes I would be 'okay, that's fine, now let's move on' – but I had fun playing myself and I am very fond of the movie."

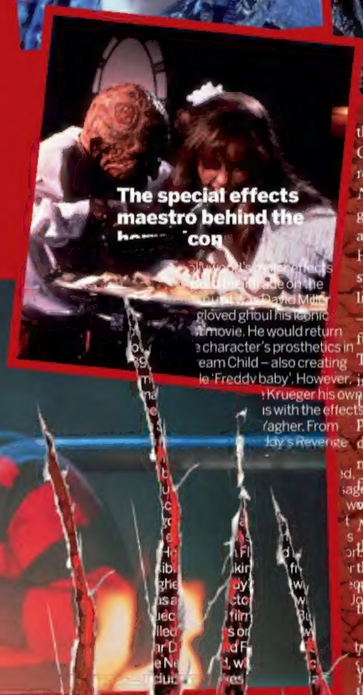
Englund agrees. "I think that *New Nightmare* complements the original film well," he says. "My favourite co-star in those films has to be Heather Langenkamp and I was thrilled when she came back for the seventh movie. But I thought that was going to be the end. I mean, there is a logical bookend in that film." This being Hollywood, of course, nothing could have been further from the truth and when 1993's *Friday The 13th* sequel, *Jason Goes To Hell*, ended with Freddy's glove dragging Mr Voorhees's hockey mask into the deep abyss, it was inevitable that something was going on at the New Line brain trust...

"I thought it was fun," says Craven of 2003's *Freddy Vs Jason*. "It's one of those ideas that had been around forever. I'd consistently been asked by fans, 'I've heard they are making that, is it true?' I'd always say, 'I think so' and then they did. But all I did was create the original character. However, it did big business and it's a compliment to Freddy and a compliment to Jason too." Englund was also thrilled to return to his most famous role for one last outing. "It is hard to bury that guy," he laughs. "How to merge the two characters, without making it ridiculous, was always the problem, though. We went through a lot of directors. At first we had Rob Bottin and then we had Guillermo del Toro, who moved on to do *Blade 2*, and then we finally had Ronny Yu, who turned out to be a match made in heaven."

After being replaced in the 2010 remake *A Nightmare On Elm Street* by *Watchmen* actor Jackie Earle Haley, and rumours of a *Freddy Vs Jason Vs Ash* film going nowhere, it appears Englund's days as Freddy are over. "I was always sure that they would do a remake," admits the actor. "I think the problem with the Ash storyline was that the Sam Raimi/Bruce Campbell camp wanted to end the franchise. Maybe have Ash defeat Freddy, which I thought was a great idea, but New Line weren't so sure." There was also the idea of a prequel, which even Craven admits he was interested in. "They would have had to get Robert to the table and have him agree to do it, and approve the script and if that happened then, yes, I'd have been interested in going back to these films," reveals the director. "I think a prequel would be quite interesting to direct."

Regardless of what could have been, looking back, Englund says that he can easily pinpoint the reason for the enduring legacy of Freddy Krueger. "I think that we were simultaneous with the video and DVD revolution, which gave us access to more fans watching horror in a different way," says the actor. "Suddenly fans were studying these movies and bringing them home. I am on four generations of fans now. The last one came out in 2003 and the first one was in 1984. I think it is as simple as a nightmare itself. It is so universal. It is like the dentist in *Marathon Man*. At some point in one of those movies there is a moment that correlates with the viewer. Just like a bad dream."

New Nightmare controversially altered the appearance of Freddy somewhat.



The special effects maestro behind the horror icon

Kudos to the make-up team for creating an effect that still holds up nearly 25 years on.

FREDDY ON DVD

The best Elm Street releases out there

Currently, the two-disc edition of the original is the pick of the *Elm Street* DVDs – largely due to a razor-sharp transfer and two excellent documentaries on the film. However, the present boxset of the first seven movies can't be sniffed at either. That said, true Freddy buffs owe it to themselves to pick up the eight-disc *Nightmare On Elm Street* Legacy collection from the States. This baby has a whole DVD dedicated to exclusive documentaries and behind-the-scenes goodies. *Freddy Vs Jason*, meanwhile, can be found in a fabulous two-disc release, absolutely crammed with extra features. Sadly, no matter where you look, 1989's *The Dream Child* is only available in a censored R-rated version.